

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5065

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINR MX

SUBJ: DEATH OF LUCIO CABANAS BARRIENTOS

REF: MEXICO 5563

1. SECRETARIAT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE ANNOUNCED DEC 2 THAT TROOPS OF THE 27TH MILITARY ZONE EARLIER THAT DAY HAD ENGAGED GUERRILLA GROUPS OF LUCIO CABANAS NEAR TECPAN DE GALEANA, GUERRERO. CABANAS AND TEN FOLLOWERS WERE KILLED. ON NOVEMBER 30 CABANAS HAD LOST SEVENTEEN MEN AND A CACHE OF WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION IN A CONFRONTATION WITH THE ARMY.

2. CABANAS, LEADER OF A GUERRILLA BAND SINCE 1967, IS CREDITED WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEATHS OF 150 SOLDIERS AND THIRTY KIDNAPPINGS, THE MOST SPECTACULAR OF WHICH WAS THE JUNE 1974 ABDUCTION OF GUERRERO SENATOR (ELECTED GOVERNOR DEC 1) RUBEN FIGUEROA, WHO WAS RESCUED BY THE MEXICAN ARMY SEPT 8.

3. CABANAS'S BODY HAS BEEN POSITIVELY IDENTIFIED BY THREE PERSONS, ONE A FELLOW EXTREMIST, REPORTEDLY THE SOURCE OF INFORMATION LEADING THE ARMY TO CABANAS. AUTHENTICITY OF CABANAS'S DEATH DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE IN DOUBT.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH SIZE OF CABANAS GROUP MAY HAVE VARIED

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(CERTAINLY ESTIMATES OF IT DID) THE MORE THAN 40 GUERRILLAS

KILLED SINCE SEPT PLUS THE DEATH OF CABANAS HAS SURELY DECIMATED THE RANKS AND LEADERSHIP OF THE GUERRILLAS IN THE STATE OF GUERRERO, AND WE BELIEVE THE GOM WILL ENJOY A RESPITE, AT LEAST IN THAT AREA.

ARMY WILL OF COURSE RECEIVE MERITED ACCOLADES FOR HAVING FINALLY ELIMINATED THE ONLY TERRORIST KNOWN BY NAME TO THE MEXICAN PUBLIC. IT SHOULD BE RECALLED, HOWEVER, THAT CABANAS'S ACTIVITY WAS GEOGRAPHICALLY RESTRICTED. TO EXTENT THAT TERRORIST ACTIVITY IN MEXICO REPRESENTS THREAT TO POLITICAL STABILITY, (AND WE BELIEVE IT MINIMAL) THE ANONYMOUS VIOLENCE OF URBAN TERRORIST GROUPS IS CAUSE FOR GREATER CONCERN THAN CABANAS EVER WAS.
BRANDIN

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